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SERMON CCCXXIII.

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CHRISTIAN UNION OF THE HEART AND TREASURE.

A MISSIONARY SERMON.

"For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."—MATT. VI. 21.

The object of Christ, in this part of his discourse, is to show that inasmuch as our hearts follow our treasure, our treasure should be bestowed where it is most desirable that we should fix our hearts.

The sentiment of the text is confirmed by our common feelings and practice. In whatever object you invest that which is most precious to you, your heart goes instinctively towards it. Shrewd men act on this principle in their secular enterprises. When they wish to secure the influence of an important individual in their projects, they prevail on him to invest property in them, feeling sure that where his treasure is, there his heart will be also. We are all interested in an object in which we have treasure; we inquire about it, and read what is said of it, at every opportunity.

This being so, it is of the first importance that our treasure should be bestowed where it is most desirable that we should fix our hearts. For, the objects in which a man is interested give character to his feelings and principles. You see an illustration of this in a young man who has unfortunately become attached to low company, and spends his leisure time in dissolute and brawling resorts. He has put his treasure, his chief good, where it is injurious for his affections to be found. Another individual prizes useful reading above any other amusement, or devotes himself, in his leisure moments, to some art or science. In like manner we see his pursuit imparting its character to him. It was for this reason, and upon this principle, that Christ said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." As though he had said: It is infinitely desirable that

you should live for heaven. In order to do this, put your treasures there, and then you will be sure to think much of heaven, and live for it, and expect it. For where your treasure is there will your heart be also.

Though the principle contained in the text is, perhaps, sufficiently illustrated for the object of this discourse, yet because it is an interesting principle, I will show its operation in one or two further particulars. Our feelings towards the Savior are affected by the treasure which we have committed to him. You, christian, have committed your soul to Christ. The words of scripture find a response in you, "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him until that day." It may fill us with solemn awe to think what Christ has engaged to do. You rely on him implicitly in order to be saved. You anticipate dying, appearing before God, the last judgment, and the final sentence, trusting only and wholly in Jesus Christ. Believers every where have thus given their souls to Christ for salvation. When men have a precious treasure to send from place to place, how careful they are about the manner of its transmission, and the character and responsibility of the man who bears it. When a ship, with an immensely rich freight, is reported as missing, the feelings of the owners and of the underwriters are intense; and when the noble thing is at last in sight, their eyes feast themselves with her proud form and movement, and they almost thank and bless the unconscious vessel for bearing that rich freight in safety. We may account for the love of heaven and of saints on earth towards Christ, not only from his intrinsic excellency, but from their committal of such treasures as their immortal interests to his hands. If you do not love Christ, it is because you never committed your soul to him; if you had, you would love and worship him in proportion to your sense of the treasure which he was keeping for you "against that day." The reason which the heavenly hosts give for their adoration and love of Christ is, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." Countless treasure is committed to him by all in heaven and earth who unite in that song.

Our love for the place of our treasure is illustrated by the feelings of an afflicted, weary pilgrim, here on earth, with regard to heaven. His dearest earthly friends have gone there. His home on earth is either broken up, or is robbed of its chief interest to him. The world has lost its charms; he expects and wishes for nothing which it can give. But his home is in the skies. There he expects to find all which he has lost, and to be perfectly like Christ. When that man reads of heaven, when he hears descriptions of it, his "soul longeth, yea, even panteth" for its courts. What is the reason of his interest in heaven above that of fellow christians at his side? His treasure is all there, and there his heart is, also.

It is my object in this discourse to show,  
I. That it is desirable to be supremely interested in the cause of  
Christ.

**II. In what way we may become supremely interested in it.****I. *It is desirable to be supremely interested in the cause of Christ.*****1. The cause of Christ alone is of permanent interest and importance.**

The cause of Christ is the salvation of men. Christ has no other cause in this world. "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." But it is not so much from any temporal inconvenience, or suffering, from which he would save them;—though "godliness has the promise of the life that now is," as well as "of that which is to come;"—it is chiefly from endless misery under the wrath of God. When the Savior said, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" he expressed the motive of his love to men. There are many things of extreme importance to the welfare of men. Trade and commerce are essential to human happiness; but what if this short life be the only period of our happiness? The profession of medicine is indispensable; but suppose that a man prolongs human life, and the disorder which kills beyond the tomb remains in his soul, and the souls of his patients? The profession of the law is necessary to human intercourse, and to protect the rights of men; but suppose that the successful lawyer and his clients are condemned hereafter, at that tribunal whose judgment is the second death? The cause of education is important; but suppose that teachers and pupils fail to know God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent, and their intellectual and moral cultivation only makes them more susceptible to suffering hereafter, and obnoxious to the displeasure of a neglected God and Savior? It is the soul in eternity which is the subject of supreme importance; and whatever our calling is, this should be our chief concern.

You will observe that when the cause or kingdom of Christ on earth is spoken of, it is not government, or commerce, or learning, or any temporal end which is meant by it; these are means and instruments to the work of human redemption, and this itself is the "kingdom of God's dear Son." This cause alone is of permanent interest. Every other interest will be swallowed up at death in the concerns of the soul. When a king dies, it is of more interest to him whether his soul enters heaven, or is shut out, than it ever was to know on earth how great were his dominions, his treasures, and his hosts. The heart of this nation is soon to be agitated again with the question which of her statesmen is to preside over her for the next four years. But let us suppose that the day of judgment has come, and the soul of one of the humblest of this nation is standing up before Christ, and the last decisive sentence is about to be pronounced upon him. We, the spectators, will feel that it is a matter of greater interest and importance what that sentence is, than who shall now occupy the thrones of this world.

There are several men in this country of whom the people are proud, for their accomplishments and reputation. The day is coming

when such men, unless they are holy, will be forgotten. You have kept a lamp burning through the night, and while it was dark, that lamp was the light of every thing in the room. At last it is day, and while you are moving about the room, you accidentally catch a glance of it. The lamp is burning and you did not know it. You had not thought of it for some time, because the daylight had swallowed up the light of it. So there are some minds which now give much light in this dark world ; they are called the lights of the age ; but when the morning of eternity dawns on the world, and—I will not say he who is the light of heaven, but when—angels and glorified men “shine forth in the kingdom of their Father,” the minds which were highly esteemed of the world, but knew not God, will be as “a lamp despised ;” and when they are put into obscurity by a greater light, they that were wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.

The cause of human salvation is the only one of all those which interest and agitate the world, which is of permanent interest and importance. He who is in any way laboring to promote it, has identified himself with something which is to endure forever. He who devotes himself to any temporal object as his chief end, however desirable that end may be, will find that he chased a shadow. He that is supremely engaged in promoting the salvation of souls, is helping to build up a kingdom which cannot be moved.

2. The desirableness of being supremely interested in the cause of Christ, may be seen by anticipating our probable estimate of things when we are in eternity.

The affairs of men are all to be examined with reference to their connection with the glory of God. The exploits and the benevolent actions, the civil and literary efforts of men, will be scrutinized to ascertain the aim and end of their authors ; whether it was to promote the spiritual and eternal good of men, or a mere temporal pleasure and benefit, without reference to the glory of God or the good of the soul. Weighed in this balance, statesmen and warriors will, many of them, be found wanting. The great novelists who will have contributed to the amusement of successive generations, and have been praised and extolled by them, will probably find that if they had each of them been instrumental in turning one soul from its sins, or confirming its religious principles, they would have some permanent source of satisfaction ; but many of them will see in the light of eternity that their influence has been wholly wasted, as though they had laboriously and curiously wrought figures in the sand on the sea shore. A humble servant of God, in a poor and obscure town, who has brought souls to Christ, will hereafter be found to have done more good, and will be honored more in heaven, than a celebrated novelist whose works are the ornament and pride of modern literature. He, if unreconciled to God, will find his name obscured and forgotten, but the other will be had in everlasting remembrance.

In the bay of Alexandria, in Egypt, stood the tower of Pharos, as a light house. On the base of the tower the builder had inscribed the name of the reigning monarch in a composition which he knew would not last long, and underneath, deep in the marble, he cut his own name. The king's name soon perished, and then the name of the artist appeared, lasting as the marble. The names of poor and obscure servants of God are thus covered over in this world by the names and fame of worldly men. They shall perish, but the names of the good are graven "in the rock forever," and will appear to praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ. It is better to turn one sinner from his ways than to be the most illustrious of mere worldly and selfish men; and this will be our estimate of things in another world. Every thing which we do, or enjoy, or suffer in this world, which is not connected with the good of our souls or the souls of others, will hereafter be as the chaff which the wind driveth away. All that we did for the cause of Christ will then rise to its just importance, its value will increase with the duration of the soul, and the unfolding scenes of heavenly experience and prospects. In the other world we shall find that this earth is of extreme interest to heaven as the place where the incarnation of Christ, and the atonement, made "known to principalities and powers in heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God." Many who enter heaven will no doubt be surprised at the interest which angels and all celestial beings feel in this world. They will see the Son of God upon the throne of the universe in the form of a glorified man, and still conducting the affairs of this world wholly with reference to the cause of human salvation. If they have been indifferent in the service of Christ, and are scarcely saved, their feelings in looking back to earth, their embarrassment in the society of ministering spirits, of apostles and martyrs, and faithful Christians, will almost make them wish to return here and labor in the cause of Christ. But if they have been devoted to that cause, and their meat and their drink has been to promote it, they will be qualified to enter at once and fully into the interest of heaven for this earth, and will be welcomed and honored by the Savior, and by his angels and saints. It must be our great endeavor in this world to identify ourselves with the cause of Christ, and then we shall lay up for ourselves a good foundation for the time to come, and lay hold on everlasting life.

*II. In what way may we become supremely interested in the cause of Christ?*

The Savior tells us that we must put our treasure in it, and then our hearts will be in it also. The reason why any are not interested in the cause of Christ is, they have no treasure in it. You feel but little or no interest in those enterprises which do not involve your treasure. The reason why some christians feel so little interest in the cause which they profess to love is, they have never put much treasure in it. How surely a man will feel an interest in the school or college where his children are taught. His treasures are there.

What brings a certain family to the Monthly Concert of prayer for Foreign Missions, who formerly came but seldom, if at all? A son or daughter has gone on a foreign mission; the name of Ceylon, Sandwich Islands, Burmah, Syria, touches every chord of their hearts; they have a treasure connected with the Monthly Concert, and their hearts are there also. Now, if we would make the cause of Christ near to us, we must devise methods of putting treasure in it.—To be supremely interested in the cause of Christ,

1. We must consecrate our souls to Christ and his cause.

If we live for eternity, rather than for this world, we shall cleave to the Savior of men, because our highest hopes will be identified with him. It is a profitable and solemn question for each of us, Am I living for this world, or for eternity? Are my plans, and labors, and pleasures, and hopes, affected by the expectation of eternal life beyond the grave? or are they bounded by the limits of this short life? If we desire to find our final home in heaven, we must give our souls to Christ to be saved according to the plan of mercy revealed in the gospel, and we must esteem our relation to Christ more precious than any other relation. We shall feel this, if we are Christ's; for it is a natural consequence, as well as a requisition, that if any man truly comes after him, he will love only in a subordinate manner, father and mother, and children, and houses and lands, for Christ's sake.

But we are not believers in Christ, we are not truly looking for that city which hath foundations, and we cannot dwell in it after death, unless we have given up our souls to it, and to its glorious Head. You cannot expect to be an heir of salvation, unless you have embraced the way of salvation by Christ. If you have embraced it, you will prefer it above your chief joy. The first thing necessary, in order to have an interest in the kingdom of Christ, in which we all have some hope that we shall spend eternity, is, to consecrate your souls to Christ. The consequence will be, the kingdom of heaven will be to you the pearl of great price.

We must not think that religion consists in one act of submission, of repentance, of faith, and consecration. This is only the strait gate of the way of life. Many, we fear, regard repentance, and faith, and consecration to Christ, as they do a ticket of admission, which is produced and given up at the entrance to a place, and is not required again. Religion is not one act alone; it is supreme, continued consecration and devotedness to God. Have you given yourselves and all your interests, for time and eternity, to Christ and his kingdom? This is religion; and by this means, that kingdom will be precious to your hearts. Your first love for it will continue.—To be supremely interested in the cause of Christ,

2. Parents should devote their children to Christ and the cause of human salvation.

If we look upon our children as consecrated to promote the Savior's name and kingdom in the world, it will have a great effect in

making that kingdom dear to us. It will be infinitely better for us, and for them, to make this disposal of them, than to wish and to endeavor that they may have those qualifications which will secure the friendship of this world. "Know ye not that the friendship of this world is enmity with God?" It may gratify us to see them flattered, and honored, and prospering in the world. But how shall we estimate these things in the day of judgment, and in the distant ages of eternity? Then, to have been the parent of one who has served and glorified Christ, and promoted human salvation, will be more esteemed than to have given to an empire a king or queen. Labor and pray then that Christ would take our children and use them for his glory, and our habitual consideration of them, as thus devoted, will greatly endear his kingdom to our hearts.—To be supremely devoted to the cause of Christ,

### 3. We must contribute of our substance to promote it.

We have peculiar opportunities, at the present day, of doing something both to manifest and to promote our interest in this cause. It is the purpose of the pastors of churches to induce every individual to be a contributor, and to have personal application made to every one for a donation, however small. My present object is to show to every individual, the good effect of being a cheerful contributor to the cause of Christ.

The question before us is this: How may we become supremely interested in the cause of Christ? How can we devise ways of attaching our interest to eternal things? The answer is, Put your treasure there. Take something which is valuable to you, not a mere superfluity, but something which is of solid value to you, and give it to this cause. It may not be a great sum; but in giving two mites you may give more than the rich. The effect of it will be this: If you do it with prayer, and as an act of pious service, God will bless you for it. It will be a bond between your soul and God, to have given him an offering. Every one is a friend to him that giveth gifts, and so is God. It will give you an interest in the sublime and glorious enterprise of converting the world. It will enlist you as a co-worker together with God and with Christ, in the cause of human redemption. It will promote personal religion, if you do it from religious motives.

At a Monthly Concert in a small parish, it was found that some one uniformly contributed a bank note. It excited curiosity to know who of the people was able to give such a sum so often. At last, it was observed that a poor laborer, a member of the church, had improved greatly in his christian character and feelings, so as to be exemplary for his love and devotedness to Christ. He was found to be the contributor. His alms went with his prayers, and both came up together for a memorial before God, and God blessed him with rich spiritual blessings.

No one can prescribe to another what he must give, neither do we plead so much for large sums, as for a contribution from each indi-

vidual, in a right spirit, and for efforts at spiritual improvement in the act of giving. A female in Boston, in 1839, dependent on her daily labor, took one hundred dollars, which she had saved, and gave it to the cause of foreign missions. No doubt some would say, she was imprudent, and will ask what she can expect in times of sickness and dependence, but want and suffering.

I would not present this case as a rule, but I will say, If this woman had this alabaster box of precious ointment, which she wished to break upon her Savior's feet, "let her alone." If she did it with an irrepressible desire to show Christ her love and gratitude to him, I venture to say, there never was a happier soul on earth than she, in making that gift. There were in her heart emotions of love to the Savior, a consciousness of his love to her, of nearness and communion with him, accompanied with tears of joy, and a full assurance of hope, which no doubt made her wish to labor still more, so as to repeat her offerings.

We are apt to be contracted, short sighted creatures in our intercourse with God. We cling to our substance and hide it from God, when we might receive fruit from him a hundred fold, even in this life. Suppose that I take a sum which I had purposed to lay by for my children, and impelled by a sense of the goodness of God to me, lay it upon his altar with a cheerful, joyful heart. Suppose that it is ten times more than, in my circumstances, men would judge to be my proportion, and in giving it, I should say, "I ask no return for this; my reward is overpaid by the pleasure of making the consecration." I should expect not only to love God more in this world, and to love his kingdom better, but in the day of judgment, and in eternity, to experience a peace and joy at the thought of having done what God gave me the grace to do, which will be beyond all price. Let us act in this matter for the day of judgment, and for ages beyond the judgment.

Solicitors of contributions for benevolent objects, sometimes ask their pastor if they shall make application to the poorest people, who are themselves objects of charity. It might be asked, in reply, What have they done that they should be shut out from this inestimable privilege? Suppose that a Pharisee had met the poor widow at the door of the temple, when she came with her two mites, and had said, Woman, you are too poor to contribute; and had turned her away! What injury he would have done her! I tremble to think of the loss he would have occasioned her! Christ was in the temple, watching the contributors to the treasury, and she would have lost her Savior's blessing, her place in the New Testament, and the untold influence which her example, and the Savior's command upon her conduct, have exerted and will continue to exert throughout the world, to the end of time.

I cannot but think that there was something peculiar in the history of those "two mites," that they should have been thus honored. Christ said that they were "all her living." Perhaps it had been

impressed on her mind that she ought to contribute something to the treasury of the Lord, and to do it soon. But she had only those two mites, and where should she get her next meal, if she gave them away? Strong in faith, and determined to do something which God should see was an expression of her ardent love, she bent her way to the treasury of the Lord's house. Little did she think what eyes were upon her, that the Son of God saw, and knew her, and her gift; or that, as she dropped her little offering and turned away, she should ever have any other reward for it than a good conscience, and the secret approbation of God. Amongst the spirits of the just made perfect, that woman has an everlasting source of satisfaction in thinking about her feelings and conduct, in giving those two mites. What will those poor church members say, who plead poverty as an excuse for not contributing, when they see her at the judgment seat? How will they justify their conduct to her, to say nothing of their Judge? Let no solicitor rob any poor person of the opportunity of being associated with her in her joy.

There is a divine threatening which is not often repeated amongst the warnings and terrors of the bible. It is in the fifty first Psalm: "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy fold." No expression of anger is more overwhelming than the refusal of a gift. To send back an offered present is to scorch and wither the soul. If God has a form of reprobation which he would inflict upon me as a mark of his peculiar wrath, let him shut up my heart from giving to his cause and kingdom. "I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor he-goats out of thy fold. No stone shalt thou lay in that temple whose topstone is to be the signal of universal joy and praise; thy offerings shall not beautify heaven, nor make its music louder and sweeter by bringing souls into it?"

But some one will ask, "If I make an effort this year to aid the cause of Christ, will not the call be repeated the coming year?" Yes, and till heaven receives you to those pleasures forevermore, of which benevolent effort in the cause of human salvation is now a foretaste.

"But I am able to give only a small sum!" Happy, thrice happy, because of it. If you were rich, and gave of your abundance, you would not be so able as you are now to make an effort which you will feel, and which, if done with prayer, imploring that God will accept your sacrifice as a token of your love, will be a richer blessing than if you gave superfluous thousands. If every contribution could be the fruit of self denial, its good effect on the giver would be greatly multiplied.

If any one is disposed to sacrifice some possession or treasure which is very dear to him, let him be deliberate and careful in so doing. Unless you do it with something of Abraham's faith,—if you do it from impulse, or because you are urged, or because you are ashamed or afraid to keep it; in short, if you do it from any other motive than

because you wish to bind yourself closer to God and the cause of Christ, you may regret that you made the offering. But if you prefer to change the investment of that treasure from earth to heaven, from time to eternity, or to give it to Christ, who shall forbid you? The world may think you a fool. Let us, if necessary, be "fools for Christ's sake." "We walk by faith, and not by sight."

The blessing which Christ promised the young ruler if he would consecrate his possessions to him was, "And thou shalt have treasure in heaven." If we had more treasure there we should be more heavenly minded. Take from this world your love of honor and pleasure and expectations of supreme happiness, and the means by which you might procure it, and transfer them to the cause of Christ, and to God's right hand. Consider the kingdom of Christ and heaven as your rest and home;—send your treasure forward, and it will add to the future joy and blessedness of the place which Christ is preparing for you. Works cannot justify us, but they are the objects of reward; and by giving our treasure to Christ, we shall find hereafter that heaven is far more to us than it would otherwise have been. In this world, Christ and heaven will be precious to us in proportion as we feel that our treasure is connected with them. We think too little of the wisdom and benevolence of Christ in saying, "Sell that ye have and give alms; provide for yourselves bags that wax not old, a treasure in heaven that faileth not." You have had occasion of late years to pity some who had investments in worthless funds. No one, however, was ever an object of such pity under these misfortunes as they will be whose treasure will hereafter be found to have been wholly in this world, and none of it in any thing which will survive the destruction of this globe. Our hearts are prone to keep our treasure here, and in turn our treasure fixes our hearts to earth and perishable things. Now, since we know that our hearts ought to be supremely interested in the kingdom of heaven, let us multiply our treasure in it, and then our hearts will be there also.

## SERMON CCCXXIV.

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### REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

"Oh Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years."—HAB. iii. 2.

This is a prayer often uttered by the people of God. When they are favored with no special manifestations of the divine presence, when they behold around them no cheering indications of the progress of the gospel, and, especially, when iniquity abounds and the love of many waxes cold, they are wont to lift up their eyes to the hills whence their salvation cometh, crying with troubled yet trusting hearts, "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

I need not tell you, my brethren, that we have occasion to utter this prayer. And we do offer it, both in the great congregation, and the more familiar prayer meeting;—I trust I may say, also, at the family altar, and in the solitude of the closet. But with what spirit do we pray? Words, alone, do not prevail with the Searcher of hearts. Do we properly appreciate the object we seek? Have we intense desires for it—such desires as prompt us to appropriate and efficient action? Do we pray in faith? Is there no lurking unbelief in our hearts, with respect either to the willingness and power of God to bless us, or—as we would now more particularly inquire—the desirableness of the blessing sought? Who does not see, that even a latent doubt on this last mentioned point, may render our prayers unavailing, and the efforts connected with them feeble and fruitless? No man will pray heartily, or labor with all his might, for that which he suspects is either unreal or unprofitable.

Now that most evangelical christians have full faith in revivals of religion, we rejoice to believe. Yet there are some excellent minds, we cannot but apprehend, clouded with doubt on this subject. They inquire secretly, if not openly, are these extraordinary social excitements desirable? Do the claims of the gospel change with times, and seasons, and circumstances? Are we not constantly bound to glorify God in our bodies and our spirits which are his? Is not the case of the impenitent at all times fearful; and is it not ever our duty to pray for them, and seek their salvation? Is not an even, steady course of feeling and effort, above all things desirable? Is not a

calm, noiseless, uniform interest—a gradual and constant ingathering of souls—rather to be sought than those intense popular excitements, by many prized so highly?

It is with an eye to queries like these, as well as with the hope of deepening the convictions of those who have never doubted, that we would now enlarge on the subject presented in the text. We need not detain you with formal definitions. We use terms in their ordinary and well known sense. With this understanding, we ask your attention to a brief argument for revivals of religion. We would suggest several considerations illustrative of their desirableness and importance. And,

I. *They are favored by all analogy.* We may refer, on this point, to the constitution and course of nature. Nay, even to mute and inanimate nature. There are, indeed, certain fixed and invariable laws, invisible as the Being who ordained them—laws whose energy is every where felt, and felt constantly. There are ten thousand processes ever going forward steadily and silently. The earth moves constantly and calmly onward in its orbit, and revolves with quiet regularity on its axis. Day and night follow each other in a changeless order, and the seasons deviate not from their long settled round. The ocean has its stated ebb and flow. From its perpetual exhalations teeming clouds are formed. By these, in due course, the fountains are replenished, and the streams, which are ever hastening back to their source. But in connection with these and other processes innumerable, in connection with those very laws which work often so calmly, what excitements has nature, what agitations, what stirring scenes, what extraordinary and unlooked for events! The river which was flowing on of late in quiet beauty, is swollen now, and turbid, and tumultuous, disdaining its old limits, and sweeping away the firmest and most ancient barriers. The “great and wide sea,” which but yesterday was smooth as the polished mirror, seeming to him who gazed into its depths like a nether firmament, is to-day all in commotion, its billows high as mountains, and the gallant ship on its bosom “staggering to and fro like a drunken man.” The landscape, which now lies in calm and beautiful repose before you, in clear and gladsome sunlight, may to-morrow be darkened by the tempest’s wing; the voice of the tornado may be loud and terrible on its hills and in its vallies. The solid earth beneath our feet, all moveless though it seems, may the next hour tremble and quake, through some mighty subterranean agency, and in its yawning fissures threaten to engulf us.

In all these illustrations, be it noted, we have in view but a single point of analogy. The permanent, the regular, the calm, the uniform, the immutable, do indeed abound in nature. But she has her changes, too, her extraordinary movements, her special and powerful excitements. They who, in respect to the progress of religion, are so fearful of the least departure from a perfect sameness—who would have the community feel now only as they will be likely always to

REVIVALS OF RELIGION.

feel, and act only as they may perpetually act—who would witness no higher degree of religious emotion than it may reasonably be expected will be constant—find no support, it is evident, in the analogies of material nature. Nor are they countenanced by the ordinary course of Providence. Recur, my hearers, to those scenes of secular life, which lie open to every one's observation. Turn, first, to the retired domestic circle. Surely, if repose is to be found on earth, unbroken mental quietude, and an even tenor of life, it may be looked for here. And, comparatively speaking, you do behold in the well-ordered family a scene of tranquility. You witness, too, the manifestation of fixed principle, the regular, systematic, steadfast, persevering discharge of duty. But are there no excitements there? In connection with all that is permanent, is there nothing of change—with all that is old, is there nothing of startling and inspiring novelty? Are there no seasons of special emotion, and corresponding action, seasons when all the domestic affections and sympathies are wrought up to extraordinary intensity? Who does not know, that from the natal day of the first-born child, to the hour when the grey-haired father sleeps in death, domestic life is all checkered with such seasons? Preserve a perfectly uniform course of feeling in the family circle—forbid all excitements there! Why, to such an end, you must shut out disease from your dwelling; by some strange sign on your door posts you must bid the destroying angel pass you by. There must be no parting scenes there—no intrusion of the fears and the sorrows, which, in the busy world, spring up in the path of the father and the son. Nay, their successes and triumphs must be unknown. You must banish from your fireside all holiday joys—there must be no rapturous greeting of long absent ones—no bridal scene, with its strangely mingled emotions—no prodigal's return from the way of folly and shame.

If we pass from the family scene to the great world without, the teachings of analogy are still more striking. In what department of human action, does life flow on in one still, unruffled, unvarying current? Is it so in mercantile pursuits? Is it so in political scenes? Is it so in professional life? Is it so in the artisan's or day laborer's humble sphere? Is it so with the rich, or with the poor; in the city, or in the country? Why, even the lowliest hamlet of our land has its occasional excitements. The most obscure and isolated husbandman of the mountains has the stir, and bustle, and unusual solicitude of the harvest, and the joy and festivity of the harvest-home. What important secular interest has ever been greatly advanced, without great and unusual excitement? By what means do this or that set of political principles triumph, either in our own land, or any other on the face of the earth where mind is free? How were the fetters of Britain's island bondmen broken? How were our fathers banded together in the triumphant struggle for freedom? And to come nearer home, how are important public objects accomplished in our own city? How are lyceums established, and rail-roads built, and state-

prison monopolies opposed, and public school establishments maintained or overthrown? How but by awakening general attention, by stirring up the people, by producing a special interest, an unusual excitement of the public mind?

Such being the general history of our race, and such their mental habitudes, in respect to all important worldly matters, why should it be essentially otherwise in religious concerns? The Former of our bodies, the Father of our spirits, the God of our daily life, is the God of grace also. If such facts and processes as we have spoken of, are of his appointment in one department of his government, why not in another? Why object to what are called revivals of religion, when in all nature and in all providence you are ever witnessing analogous phenomena? Are there not intimate connections between nature and grace, and important bearings of providence on the progress of the gospel? How reasonable, then, to look for the very analogy we have been setting forth! And how is our argument strengthened by the undisputed general fact, that the workings of the Spirit are perfectly harmonious with the laws of the human mind—that in all the operations of grace, man is dealt with as man—that human nature is not destroyed, but sanctified.

II. But we must pass now to a second argument. Thus far we have been endeavoring to show what method of grace might reasonably be looked for. We are able, also, to show what method of grace God, in his unerring wisdom, has actually adopted. We now remark that *it has been his course from the first establishment of his church on earth, to promote its interests mainly by special effusions of the Holy Spirit, or what we commonly call revivals of religion.* Says President Edwards, "Though there be a more constant influence of God's Spirit always in some degree attending his ordinances, yet the way in which the greatest things have been done towards carrying on the work of redemption, always has been by remarkable effusions, at special seasons of mercy."

There is reason to believe that such a season was enjoyed not long after the Fall, and in the lifetime of the father of our race. Of the days of Enos it is said, "Then began men to call upon the name of the Lord." In whatever way this passage be rendered, it must be understood, we think, as indicating an extraordinary interest in divine things. Not that the truly pious had never been recognized as such, or that they had utterly neglected the duty of prayer. But the spirit of devotion was, at this period, greatly increased in their hearts; they became more separate from the world; they made a more open and decided profession of godliness; and began to assemble themselves together for the purpose of publicly calling on the name of the Lord. Now in all ages of the church, just such religious phenomena—an uncommon interest, especially, in meetings for prayer, and all public ordinances—have been regarded as indubitable signs of the special presence of the Holy Spirit. We see just such things in all revivals of religion at the present day.

There was evidently a special effusion of the Holy Spirit on that generation of Israel, who, under the conduct of Joshua, took possession of Canaan. Their fathers had been perverse and rebellious, and their carcases had fallen in the wilderness. But of them it has been well said, "There never was any generation of Israel of which so much good and so little evil is mentioned." The awful judgments they had witnessed, and the uttering of God's word by Moses, seem to have proved a signal blessing to their souls. On several occasions they manifested an extraordinary zeal for God; for example, in the matter of Achan's trespass, and of the rival altar, as they regarded it, erected by the children of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh. And they had divers solemn public services appropriate to a period of uncommon religious interest, and clearly indicative of it. Of this description was the formal renewal of their covenant with God, by the whole congregation of Israel, near the close of Moses' life. Such was the second general circumcision, under the direction of Joshua; and such the writing and reading of the law before a general assembly of the people, drawn up for that purpose over against the two mountains Gerizim and Ebal. Of a similar character was Joshua's conference with the chief men of the nation at Shechem, when they deliberately and earnestly repeated their vows, and a record of them was made in the book of the law of God, and "a great stone" was set up as a permanent memorial of them. Who can doubt that, in connection with all these transactions, there was an unusual awakening of religious feeling? That it was the true spirit of piety, may be fairly inferred from what God himself says of this generation, by the prophet Jeremiah: "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown. Israel was holiness to the Lord, and the first fruits of his increase."

There was another remarkable season of religious awakening, in the days of Hezekiah. Mainly through his instrumentality, idolatry was suppressed, the zeal of the appointed ministers of religion was re-ekindled, and a new interest excited, among the people generally, in the neglected ordinances of God. That in all this there was a special interposition of divine grace, is expressly asserted. "Hezekiah rejoiced, and all the people, that God had prepared the people; for the thing was done suddenly." So deep was the public feeling, that after having celebrated, out of its usual course, the feast of the Passover—a protracted meeting of seven days—during which the Levites taught the people "the good knowledge of the Lord," and prayer and praise were offered, "the whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days; and they kept other seven days with gladness." "So there was great joy," the historian adds, "in Jerusalem: for since the time of Solomon, son of David, king of Israel, there was not the like in Jerusalem."

There was another signal revival of religion in the days of the good king Josiah. Early in his reign he began to seek after God;

and he soon became intent on the reformation of his people. No little progress had been made in this good work, when, by the providential discovery of the book of the law in the house of the Lord, it received a new and mighty impulse. As that book was read to the king, his heart was deeply affected. He sent to inquire of the Lord through Huldah the prophetess. He called together a great assembly of the people; and read to them the newly found scriptures. He then, with the whole congregation, made a solemn covenant before the Lord, "to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes, with all their heart and all their soul." And so thorough was the work of revival, that it was written of the passover subsequently celebrated by the king's command, "Surely there was not holden such a passover from the days of the judges that judged Israel, nor in all the days of the kings of Israel, nor of the kings of Judah."

With this brief notice of some of the more remarkable revivals of religion under the old dispensation, let us pass to the new. Under this, as was to be expected—it being pre-eminently a dispensation of the Spirit—they became more frequent and powerful. The day of Pentecost will at once occur to you; and the "great joy" that pervaded the city of Samaria. Nay, what is the whole book of "the Acts of the Apostles"—the whole inspired history of the primitive church—but a history of revivals? At Antioch, at Iconium, at Thessalonica, at Berea, at Corinth, at Ephesus—in almost every place where the apostles labored—there was a special and remarkable effusion of the Spirit;—there were all the signs and substantial blessings of any genuine modern revival. Public attention was arrested—preaching was eagerly listened to—the consciences of men were troubled—deep religious anxiety was awakened—and from the lips of many a young convert burst forth the song of salvation.

If we turn to the subsequent history of the church—from the close of the sacred canon to the present day—how has the cause of God been mainly advanced, but by special visitations of mercy? What was the great Reformation but a great revival of religion? Who has not heard of the extraordinary divine influences which attended the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield in England? Nor were they the only ministers of Christ in the British Isles, who have been thus favored. It is an erroneous notion that in the history of the British church but few accounts of remarkable revivals are to be found. In the days of the eminent preachers just referred to, there were several other English ministers, not of their connection, hardly less favored than they. Such, for example, were Venn, of Huddersfield, Walker, of Truro, and Berridge, of Everton. Of this last mentioned servant of God, it is related, that under his own and the joint ministry of a Mr. Hicks, about four thousand were awakened to a concern for their souls in the space of twelve months. More than two hundred years ago, under a single sermon of a Scotch preacher

named Livingston, about five hundred souls were converted. Amid the mountains of *Wales*, there have been, for centuries, frequent and remarkable outpourings of the Spirit. Nor has *Ireland*, sad as has been her condition in many respects, been utterly a stranger to revival scenes. Of our own land, I hardly need to speak. You are familiar with its history. Your minds will recur at once to the great awakening of 1740, and to many subsequent seasons of divine mercy. You will call to remembrance what your own eyes have seen, and your own ears have heard, during the last ten or fifteen years—in the years *thirty* and *thirty one*, especially. And if farther confirmation of our doctrine be desired, it shall come from *Ceylon*, from the continent of *India*, and from the isles of the Southern Sea.

How evident is it that God's plan has ever been to bless the church and the world chiefly through revivals of religion ! Shall we hesitate to concur in *his* wisdom ? Shall we doubt the desirableness of what he designs and sanctions ? How safe, how reasonable, how sacredly incumbent upon us, to give our desires and prayers the direction which God himself has so plainly indicated !

III. The clear manifestation of the divine will, is of itself sufficient to settle all controversy. But we have yet another view to take. We observe, in the third place, that *revivals of religion have peculiar power to develop and strengthen christian character*. Let it be kept in mind, that in this remark, as in all the preceding, we have reference not so much to the professed infidel, who denies all spiritual religion, as to the real christian, who has some latent doubt respecting revivals of religion, and who is inclined to regard a calm, equable, uniform course of feeling and action, as pre-eminently desirable. It may reasonably be questioned, whether *occasional excitement be not absolutely essential to the well being of mind*. It is with mind, in this respect, somewhat as with material nature. The ample provision, for example, which God has made for the agitation of the atmosphere, and the stirring and upheaving of the ocean, is not a merely arbitrary arrangement. It is wisely made ; nay, it could not be dispensed with. Equally fitting and necessary are the arrangements of divine Providence for producing occasional mental excitement. The human mind was made to be excited. And, as with air or ocean, great evil must result from its falling into a perfectly stagnant state, or even a state approaching stagnancy. For this, it may be said, none will contend. But something like this would be the natural consequence of the utter absence of impulsive influences. For the illustration of this point, take as strong a case as the possibilities of human life will afford. Just suppose some quiet, easy, incurious, steady minded, even tempered person, averse to all change, suspicious of all novelty, fearful of all excitement, irresistibly inclined to do, to-day, just what he did yesterday, and making a virtue of his unbroken uniformity. Let his residence be fixed in some most secluded valley, whose repose is never disturbed by the hissing of steam, or the rumbling of the stage coach, or even the clangor of the postboy's horn. Let all ex-

citing objects be, as far as possible, kept from his eye, and all awaking, stirring knowledges, from his mind. Let him be ever a keeper at home ; and let no agitating newspaper or magazine intrude itself there, no village gossip open her Pandora's box. Let him sit, walk, eat, drink, sleep, work, speak, think, and feel, in just the same manner, from day to day, and from year to year. What sort of man, after a process of years, will he be ? Possibly your own observation, in some singular cases, may have the better prepared you to answer this question. Would you expect to find in such a person, as the result of such a mode of life, a full development of his powers—a high and vigorous tone of intellect—lofty aspirations—noble resolves—a head and a heart for great achievements ? Would you not look rather for sluggishness and feebleness of mind—for timidity and inefficiency—for a sadly stagnant state of the whole intellectual being ?

We have reason to be thankful, that so strong a case as this is seldom met with. The appetences of the human mind, as to the point in hand, accord, in general, with the arrangements of Providence. We are all constitutionally averse to an unceasing quiescence, and a perpetual sameness of life—just as nature is said to abhor a vacuum. The human mind craves occasional excitement, and it grows thereby. It is only thus that its faculties are fully elicited and matured. What folly then to decry religious excitements ! Shall the mind be left free in the service of sin ; and cramped, and fettered, and shriveled, only in the service of God ? According, as special religious awakenings do, not only with the established course of Providence, but with our very nature, why should they cease even in the millenium ? Nay, if mind be in heaven essentially the same as here, why should they cease even there ? It is no presumptuous flight of fancy, surely, to suppose, that there may be, in a sense, revivals of religion among the blessed. There will be no need, it is true, of regeneration there ; there will be no remaining corruption to overcome. But may not the spirit be aided in that eternal progress which is doubtless its destiny, by special as well as ordinary influences ; by extraordinary seasons of impression and excitement, as well as usual and uniform helps and incentives ? Was there no uncommon emotion in heaven, think ye, when the scheme of redemption was first unfolded ? Finely and truthfully has Milton imagined the scene which followed its announcement :—

" No sooner had the Almighty ceased, but all  
The multitude of angels, with a shout  
Loud as from numbers without number, sweet  
As from blest voices, uttering joy, heaven rung  
With jubilee, and loud hosannas filled  
The eternal regions."

There is joy, we are told—peculiar joy—among the angels of God, when but one sinner repenteth. What raptures must they feel, then, when such scenes as those of Pentecost, or of the Sandwich Islands

revival, first come to their knowledge! And when, at last, voices shall be heard in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ," what an unwonted excitement—of delight, and gratitude, and love, and adoration, and all holy affections—will pervade both the angelic and the ransomed host.

It will further strengthen our argument, to consider in what circumstances, the most distinguished human characters have been formed. Where, but amid scenes of uncommon excitement and agitation? How was Napoleon prepared to grasp, almost successfully, at the empire of the world? How, but amid the strangely stirring events of the French Revolution? How came it to pass, in the seventeenth century, that such a host of giant minds sprung up in England? Human nature, surely, was of no finer or nobler mould than now. It was the age that made those mighty men. As every student of history knows, those were eventful and awakening times—times that tried and tasked men's souls, that evolved and wonderfully energized all their faculties. Great questions were pending, great interests were at stake, great conflicts were going forward, great achievements were demanded. And the human mind, as it commonly does, responded to that demand. It was so in the times of our own Revolutionary struggle. Men who in other circumstances would have been obscure, unambitious farmers, or plain country gentlemen, or plodding lawyers on some petty circuit, became known and renowned, the world over, as military commanders, or orators, or statesmen. And so has it always been. Great and uncommon exigences have produced great and uncommon men.

This general law of human attainment has a full and important application to the subject of revivals. They may be regarded as extraordinary occasions, both in the history of individuals, and of the christian community. They address to every renewed soul uncommon and most awakening demands. They are eminently fitted to arouse and invigorate all the holy affections, to strengthen and ennable christian character. And that not merely on account of the direct divine influence exerted on the believer's heart, but by reason, also, of the exciting, elevating scenes in which he is called to move. The truth of these remarks, well known facts abundantly evince. We are doubtless indebted to revival influences for some of the loftiest specimens of christian excellence the world has ever witnessed. Not to mention other cases, a striking confirmation of these views may be found, if we mistake not, in the life of that eminent servant of God, the elder President Edwards. At a somewhat early period in his ministry, his people were favored with a remarkable revival; and not long afterward, came the great awakening of 1740. He was unquestionably a holy man, when set apart to the gospel ministry. Yet the attentive reader of his diary and other writings, can hardly avoid the impression, that he received great accessions of spiritual

light and strength, during the seasons just mentioned. And in those seasons, it is abundantly evident, some of his most valuable works had their origin. Some of his clearest and most powerful doctrinal and practical sermons were prepared for the pulpit then—those, for example, on “Justification by Faith,” and that on “The Justice of God in the Damnation of Sinners.” What a mass of valuable truth, embraced in his “Narrative of Surprising Conversions,” his “Distinguishing Marks of a Work of the Spirit,” and his “Thoughts on the Revival in New England,” was he avowedly incited and aided by revival scenes to excogitate. And who can doubt that to such scenes we are greatly, if not mainly indebted, for that masterpiece of practical theology, his “Treatise concerning Religious Affections?” Nay, is not their influence perceptible, in all he was, and in all he wrote? May we not ascribe it to that influence—in part at least—that with all his acuteness and power of intellect, such childlike piety was blended—that in all his theological works, such keen spiritual discernment, such scripturalness, such a heavenly spirit, are manifest? Great and good, he might have been, had he never witnessed a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord; but not, we are persuaded, as great and good as he actually was.

But may I not bring home the point in hand to your own bosoms, my brethren? Have not *you* experienced the potent influence of revivals of religion in developing and strengthening christian character? Have you not received, at such times, the deepest impressions of divine truth you were ever conscious of? What clear, affecting views have you had of the worth of the soul, of the sinfulness of sin, of the beauty of holiness, of the glory of Christ! The world is shut out, as it were, at such blessed seasons, and the heavens are opened. The presence of God seems almost palpable. It is manifest in the anxious countenance, the heaving bosom, the falling tear; in the smile of awakened hope, and the rapturous song of the newly converted. Every thing tends to fasten the mind on the things of God, and to secure the most vigorous mental action. Every thing is suited to elicit and strengthen all the christian graces. And when the special season of mercy has passed by, a savor of it is left in the believer's heart, and the blessed result of it is seen in his life. Are not the views and impressions of divine things, with which you have been favored on some such occasions, and which delighted memory still retains, the most efficient of all dissuasives from sin, the most potent of all incentives to duty? And who of us has not observed the happy influence of a revival of religion on the character of a church? What progress has been made in religious knowledge—what old stumbling-blocks have been removed—what new habits have been formed—what a permanent elevation of the standard of duty has been secured! More has sometimes been done for a church in a brief period of religious awakening, than years of ordinary influences have accomplished.

Such, my brethren — for it is time we draw to a close — is our argument for revivals of religion. They are favored by all analogy; they are sanctioned by the wisdom of God; they have peculiar power to develope and strengthen christian character. We have only time to glance, in conclusion, at one or two objections, which may still linger in the minds of some of our hearers. And,

1. It may be asked, *do we not favor a periodical, a spasmodic religion?* By no means, we reply. With about as much propriety might it be said, that in urging upon you closet devotion, with its special awakenings of religious feeling, we are sanctioning a fitful piety; or that in pleading for the sabbath, with its peculiar exercises and excitements, we are advocating hebdomadal paroxysms of godliness. We would not be misunderstood on this point. We would insist on a constant devotion to the service of God — yea, on constant effort for the salvation of souls. And in connection with such faithfulness, the morning and the evening dew, and the gentle droppings of grace, will be constantly enjoyed. But shall these preclude the more abundant shower? The more unfaltering our christian fidelity, indeed, the more likely is it, that special seasons of divine mercy will be granted us. Those seasons will doubtless become more and more frequent and glorious, as the church gives greater and greater heed to the precept, "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord."

2. It may be said, again, *have there not sometimes been great evils in connection with revivals?* Undoubtedly, we reply. Unmingled good is unknown on earth. There is something of evil connected with the most beneficent courses of nature and Providence. There is not a single bounty of God which man may not abuse. The gifts of his grace are specially liable to perversion. The scriptures have been wrested to man's destruction. The Sabbath has been made an occasion of debauchery. The preaching of the gospel has proved to some "a savor of death unto death." Just in proportion, commonly, to the magnitude of a divine blessing, is the greatness of the evil which may be mingled with it, or to which human wickedness may pervert it. And this general law holds good in respect to revivals of religion. But who will say, it is wisdom, therefore, to discard them?

No, my brethren, harbor not for a moment, a paralyzing jealousy on this subject. It has no warrant in reason — none in scripture — none in your own experience, rightly apprehended. But be not content with a merely speculative reception of our doctrine. Stir up your hearts to offer acceptably the prayer of the text. Think, as you look around you, of the manifold blessings with which a general revival would be fraught. How would vice be suppressed, and public order be subserved, and all the interests of time be promoted! How would backsliders be reclaimed, and the hearts of the faithful be animated, and Zion put on her beautiful garments! What joy

would there be over repenting sinners — what joy in the family circle — what joy in the church ! Think, too, how all heaven would rejoice — and how the glory of God would be promoted. And as you muse on these things, let your fervent and importunate supplication be, “*O, Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years.*”

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“I AM NOT MAD.”—PAUL.

“THE husbandman labors from day to day, and from year to year, with diligence, with energy, with interest, with perseverance ; men of other occupations do the same, for the *meat that perisheth*, for the fading, dying things of time and sense. Are they mad ? O no. Every body thinks this is reasonable. But let any man be as active, diligent, and persevering to obtain the bread of life ; and he is branded as an enthusiast.

The mercantile man journeys, from east to west, from north to south ; sails over every sea, visits every clime ; tries the rigor of the frigid, and the heat of the torrid zones ; braves all the dangers of the deep, and death, in ten thousand forms. And why ? To acquire a fortune. His fortune is made. Will it save his soul ? No. Should he lose his wealth, would that loss shut him out of heaven ? No. Is that man mad ? O no. Every body thinks him a reasonable, sober man. Let another be half as active and brave half those dangers, to lay up treasures in heaven, incorruptible, undefiled, fading not away ; and he is branded as a madman.

Our country is invaded. Our rulers cry, to arms. The people fly to arms, meet the invading foe, shout, victory or death ; millions of money are expended, thousands of lives are lost, in defence of a nation’s rights. Or our government is insulted, the rulers give command, the people rush to the battle, and with equal expense of treasure and of blood, the insult is avenged, or a nation’s pride defended. Are the rulers or the people crazy ? O no. Every body believes all this consistent with sober reason. But, let christians be half as much engaged, with mild, and gospel weapons, to conquer the troops of hell, save souls from endless death, and vindicate a Savior’s injured hon-

or. What then ? Why then the cry is, Fanaticism ! Bigotry ! Superstition ! Fools ! Madmen !

A man is to be tried for life. Counsel is employed. Every point of law, which can bear upon the case, is sought out. The pleader makes every effort to bias the court in favor of his client. He feels after every trembling fibre, in the juror's heart, engages all the powers of sympathy, on the side of the accused. He calls up all the energies of his soul, and of his body too, and makes a desperate effort. Why ? Temporal life is at stake ! Is that man mad ? No. All this accords with the dictates of sound sense and sober reason. And should he fail to do all this, where there was any prospect of success, he would be branded as a traitor, and a villain. But let a christian plead with half as much ardor, for his own, or his neighbor's life eternal, in the name of Jesus, and at the court of heaven, where he is sure to prevail ; and he is called *a fool* !

A sentinel is set, to watch the approach of an enemy, and, in case an enemy appears, to give the alarm. He sees an enemy coming, but he does not sound an alarm. He sleeps, or is a traitor. He is adjudged to death, and his life is the price of his negligence or treachery.

The watchman of Zion is set upon his watch tower. He sees an enemy coming, and a dreadful and eternal tempest gathering. He sees the heavens gathering blackness, and the wrath of heaven just ready to flash eternal lightning in the sinner's face ! He hears the thunder roar in peals, as dreadful as the voice of God. He lifts up his voice like a trumpet, sounds an alarm, gives the people warning, urges them to flee the onset of approaching vengeance ; and they are ready to stone him, as they did Stephen. Who is mad ? The watchman, or the people ? "

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" Dear brethren, our office is no ordinary one. We are ambassadors from the King of Kings and Lord of Lords to a revolted world. Never had men committed to them an embassy of such deep and everlasting moment. No work ever undertaken by mortals was so important, so solemn, or connected with such amazing consequences. Among all the thousands to whom we preach, not one but will take an impression from us that will never wear out. The fate of mil-

lions through succeeding generations depends on our faithfulness. Heaven and hell will for ever ring with recited memorials of our ministry. And O, our own responsibility. There is for us no middle destiny. Our stake is for a higher throne of glory or for a deeper hell. For to say nothing of the souls committed to our care, our works leads to the altar. Our home is by the side of the Shechinah. We have daily to go where Nadab and Abihu went, and to transact with him who darted his lightning upon them. It is a solemn thing to stand so near the holy Lord God. Let us beware how by unhallored fervors we bring false fire before the Lord. Let us not fail to devote to our work our best powers, our unceasing application, consecrated by unremitting prayer. Any thing rather than careless preparations for the pulpit, and a sleepy performance in it. Forget your father, forget your mother, but forget not this infinite work of God. Soon we shall appear with our respective charges before the judgment seat of Christ. What a scene will then open between a pastor and his flock; when all his official conduct towards them shall be scrutinized, and all their treatment of him and his gospel shall be laid open; when it shall appear that an omnipresent eye followed him into his study every time he sat down to write a sermon, and traced every line upon his paper and every motion of his heart; and followed him into the pulpit, and watched every kindling desire, every drowsy feeling, every wandering thought, every reach after fame. Ah, my dear brethren, when you hear on the right hand the songs of bursting praise that you ever had existence, and on the left behold a company of wretched spirits sending forth their loud lament that you had not warned them with a stronger voice, will you not regret that all your sermons were not more impassioned, and all your prayers more agonizing?—But what is that I see? A horrid shape more deeply scarred with thunder than the rest, around which a thousand dreadful beings, with furious eyes and threatening gestures, are venting their raging curses? It is an unfaithful pastor, who went down to hell with most of his congregation; and those around him are the wretched beings whom he has decoyed to death. My soul turns away and cries, Give me poverty, give me the curses of a wicked world, give me the martyr's stake; but, O my God, save me from unfaithfulness to thee and to the souls of men.”

GRiffin.